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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 USNATO 000354

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SUBJECT: A/S BOUCHER NATO VISIT, 17 SEP 08

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Classified By: A/DCM
Walter S. Reid for Reasons 1.4(B) AND (D).

¶1. (U) SUMMARY: During September 14 meetings at NATO, Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs Richard Boucher told NATO Perm Reps that NATO and the Afghans need to be more effective in holding territory, particularly with strengthened Afghan police, provincial and local governments, and Provincial Reconstruction Teams. He also urged Allies to fund the costs of sustaining the increased size of the Afghan National Army. The Deputy Chairman of the Military Committee told Boucher that highway security was an increasingly high priority for NATO and the right balance of local and national police forces needed to be found. The Secretary General's Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia Bob Simmons said that while Pakistan is seeking a broader relationship with NATO, the Alliance was sticking to military-to-military contacts and top-level political dialogue for now. Boucher told NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer that NATO should help reinforce the growing sense in Pakistan that the fight against terrorism was one they needed to fight for their own reasons and that NATO could help the Pakistani army recognize the need to transform into a force capable of fighting in the tribal areas. NATO could also serve as an important conduit for Pakistan to have relations with the West. The Secretary General made a strong plea for NATO to be included in the planned &Friends of Pakistan& group. END SUMMARY.
NATO PERM REPS CURIOUS ABOUT PAKISTAN

¶2. (U) During a September 14 visit to NATO, Assistant Secretary Boucher told NATO PermReps at an informal coffee meeting that there had been significant progress in Afghanistan in areas such as expanding the reach of the Afghan government into new areas, improved coordination with the Afghans, and improved electricity generation. At the same time, the enemy's use of asymmetric attacks, such as the bombing of hotels and lightning attacks such as the Kandahar prison break, is creating a sense of public insecurity. He noted that in the counterinsurgency strategy of &clear, hold, build&, we were successful in clearing and fairly successful in building, but the &hold& portion of the strategy is where there are problems, and where we need to work jointly with the Afghans to improve. He outlined three priority areas for improvement:

- Police: Though there were many false starts, the Focused District Development program is progressing well. There needs to be a focus on the size and mix of national versus local police and further reforms are needed to increase the independence of the police.

- Provincial Government: The main issues are the need to get rid of the corrupting influence of poppy cultivation and drug-related crime, distribute money from the central

government to local levels, and enlist the support of the tribes.

- Provisional Reconstruction Teams: Rather than be the presence of the country they represent, they need to increase their support to local governance and provide an effective interface to the governors. These teams need to build government's capacities at a local level.

¶3. (C/NF) Assistant Secretary Boucher discussed the recent approval to enlarge the Afghan National Army (ANA) to 134,000 soldiers (122,000 active soldiers and a 12,000-man training float). He noted this would be a large increase requiring a lot of money. He stressed the need to set up a funding stream via a Trust Fund or other means to sustain the enlarged Army. He said the U.S. would foot the bill for training and equipping the additional troops, at approximately \$4-5 billion, but that the sustainment funds needed to come from worldwide sources.

¶4. (C/NF) Boucher noted the need to build capacity on both sides of the Afghan-Pakistan border. He also noted that the new Pakistan government was working more actively to stem the flow of fighters and support from the tribal areas in Pakistan. In a sign that the Pakistanis increasingly recognize the need for cross-border cooperation, they had recently requested assistance from the 101st to stop insurgents from returning from Afghanistan into Pakistan to engage Pakistani security forces conducting a sweep in the tribal areas.

AFGHAN "AWAKENING COUNCILS" NOT LIKELY

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¶5. (C/NF) In a meeting with Boucher, Deputy Chairman of the Military Committee Lt Gen Karl Eikenberry (USA) said that his oft-repeated quote that "where the highway ends, the insurgency begins" was not really valid any longer due to the recent attacks on the road system in Afghanistan. With highway security a high priority for NATO, Eikenberry stated he has thought a lot about the delineation of police and military tasks and how to build a balanced local and national police force. He stated that community policing was difficult due to a lack of accountability, which army troops provided in the Iraq model. He also commented that the Allies have shown more commitment than many nay-sayers expected. He reported that at their September 12-14 meeting, NATO Chiefs of Defense had discussed NATO taking on a greater role in police training. Finally, Eikenberry relayed that France, Germany, Italy and Spain were currently the "blockers" of General Craddock's request for new ISAF counter-narcotic authorities. Most of their concerns centered on President Karzai's erratic performance over the last few months, and a concern about civilian casualties related to any ISAF counter-narcotic operations.

¶6. (C/NF) Boucher cautioned against trying to reinvent the "Anbar Awakening" model in Afghanistan. He stated that a more decentralized approach was needed due to the more complex ethnic and tribal mix in Afghanistan, and added that it would be several years before the police would be able to provide comprehensive security throughout Afghanistan. He also felt it was important to get a NATO dialogue going with Pakistan, for which the Secretary General's visit to Islamabad in late October could be a good catalyst.

PAKISTAN WANTS MORE RELATIONS WITH NATO

¶7. (C/NF) In a meeting with the Secretary General's Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia Bob Simmons, Assistant Secretary Boucher was assured that the Russians were holding firm on their offer to allow ISAF logistical transit through Russia despite the deterioration of NATO's relations with Russia after the fighting in Georgia. However, Simmons said that some issues remain in negotiating corresponding transit arrangements through Uzbekistan and

Kazakhstan. Turkmenistan also offers a potential route, though the Turkmen would need some signal from Russia that this would be acceptable.

¶18. (C/NF) In regards to Pakistan, Simmons noted the ongoing discussions of a balance of Presidential and Prime Ministerial powers in Pakistan. He stated that Prime Minister Gillani saw himself more in the UK model of a Prime Minister. Simmons said his impression was that the U.S. was not warm to the idea of making Pakistan a NATO global partner. Boucher noted that there was no real U.S. position on this issue, but that NATO could usefully help build the Pakistani military through courses on counterinsurgency doctrine and military transformation. Simmons related that Pakistan desires a wider relationship with NATO, but for now NATO was sticking to military-to-military contacts and top-level political dialogue. (NOTE: In subsequent conversations with Charge, Simmons clarified that a potential "global partner" posture for Pakistan would not envisage a NATO diplomatic presence in Pakistan. Simmons was not sure whether some Allies would seek a corresponding status for India as a book-end to a Pakistan relationship. END NOTE.)

NATO SECGEN DISCUSSES UPCOMING PAKISTAN VISIT

¶19. (C/NF): During his meeting with Boucher, the NATO Secretary General noted he would travel to Pakistan at the end of October and asked what Boucher thought NATO's role should be in Pakistan. Boucher said that both President Zardari and Prime Minister Gillani were personally committed to fighting terrorism and it was important to help build the notion that this is was a Pakistani fight with which the West is assisting. It is also important to instill in the military the recognition that while India may be the existential threat to Pakistan, the Taliban is the urgent threat. The military needed to transform away from the army of the Punjab plain aimed at defending against an Indian invasion, to an "army of the FATA" capable of conducting counter-insurgency operations. Cooperation with NATO was more palatable to most Pakistanis than with the U.S., and cooperating through NATO made it easier for Pakistan to cooperate with the West. The Secretary General agreed and said he would carry much of that message with him to

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Pakistan. He said NATO's contribution could be through training, such as by bringing Pakistani officers to NATO training schools, and through sharing its own experience in transforming from a force designed to defeat a Soviet invasion to one conducting operations in Afghanistan.

¶10. (S/NF) In response the Secretary General's question about the prospects for a regional approach, Boucher said it was difficult to see where regional approaches were headed. There had been cross-border Jirgas, the Canadians have been bringing Pakistan and Afghanistan together to discuss border issues, and Turkey had arranged a series of meetings between the Heads of State. Boucher mentioned the U.S. and UK were discussing forming a Friends of Pakistan group that would include major countries in the region and regional organizations. When he learned they were not planning to include NATO, the Secretary General objected strongly and wondered how the EU could be included but not NATO (reftel). He urged the U.S. and UK to reconsider and said he was worried about a tendency by others to see NATO as "a kind of black sheep" even while its soldiers were fighting and dying in Afghanistan. De Hoop Scheffer also noted with approval the announced increase in U.S. forces in Afghanistan and said he hoped the troops would go to fill gaps in the Combined Joint Statement of Requirements rather than simply placed under COMISAF command without specifically counting against the Statement of Requirements, an arrangement that he felt took pressure off other Allies to meet deficits.

¶11. (S/NF) COMMENT: The timing of Boucher's visit amidst quickly rising sensitivity toward Afghanistan reactions to

civilian casualties was quite helpful. His consultative, collegial style played very well with Allies, who are groping for a way to feel they are players on core issues in Afghanistan and the broader regional agenda. END COMMENT.
VOLKER